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Gilbert Introduces Resolution Regarding Chemical Spill Notification

LANSING- State Sen. Jud Gilbert (R-Algonac), today introduced a resolution urging environmental officials in the United States and Canada to develop greater communication and stronger safeguards for notifications of chemical spills in Great Lakes waters.

“More needs to be done to assure faster and more consistent communications between the private and governmental entities involved,” said Gilbert. “Standard and required protection measures should be instituted on both sides of the border.”

The resolution is in response to a chemical spill during the August blackout that left many residents along the St. Clair River with rashes and other illnesses. Gilbert’s resolution calls for environmental officials to reexamine policies that have proven ineffective and modify procedures to ensure a better response to future chemical spills. Although Michigan and Ontario have notification procedures in place, notification to residents of the recent spill did not occur until five days later.

Gilbert hopes his resolution will result in a system in which water treatment plants in both the US and Canada are notified immediately of chemicals spills. He, along with other officials, are calling for the development of a chemical detection device that will alert plant operators that hazardous chemicals are approaching water intakes before the chemicals arrive in the plants.